

October 30, 2009

TO: Chancellor, District of Columbia Public Schools
Public Charter School Directors
Public Charter School Board
FROM: Kerri L. Briggs, State Superintendent of Education
RE: DC CAS Read Aloud Accommodations for the 2009-2010 School Year

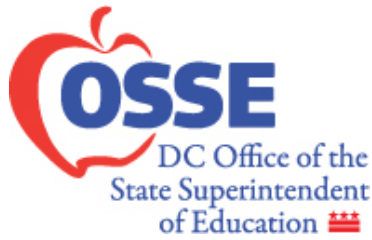
On October 3, 2008, the DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) entered into a formal Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the United States Department of Education (USDE) to ensure that the read-aloud accommodation for the statewide reading assessment is provided to the appropriate student population in the District of Columbia. This memo serves as an update to OSSE's January 31, 2009, "DC CAS Read Aloud Accommodations for School Year 2008-2009" memo.

In compliance with the "Year 1" targets identified in the MOA, LEAs reduced the use of this accommodation by more than 50 percent for the 2008-2009 school year. The MOA states that in "Year 2" OSSE will not count any student as a participant who receives the read-aloud accommodation on the reading assessment unless a validity study indicates that it is a valid accommodation.

Earlier this year OSSE commissioned such a validity study. That study was unable to determine that the read-aloud accommodation is a valid accommodation for any student. As a result, the read-aloud accommodation for the reading test will be considered a modification of the test for all future administrations of the DC CAS. For this reason, any student receiving the read-aloud accommodation on the DC CAS reading assessment will be considered a non-participant, and the student's scores will be invalidated for the purposes of accountability. Please note this policy applies specifically to the read-aloud accommodation for the reading test.

OSSE recognizes the effort undertaken by LEAs to achieve the reduction in 2009 and appreciates the significant progress made to date. To support LEAs in meeting the 100 percent reduction, OSSE is releasing a new *Testing Accommodations Manual* for teachers and IEP teams to use when making important decisions about how to assess students with disabilities and English Language Learners. This manual is available on OSSE's Web site and will be distributed via e-mail to all LEAs.

Training will be held in mid-November on the selection and implementation of accommodations. This will be the first of quarterly trainings that will take place during the 2009-2010 school year, as stated in the MOA. You will be notified of additional trainings as they are scheduled. As always, technical assistance is available from OSSE staff throughout the year. If you need technical assistance, please contact Chandra Williams at (202)481-3758 or chandra.williams@dc.gov.



OSSE will hold a conference call on Wednesday, November 4 at 4p.m. to address any questions raised by this memo or the accompanying manual. The conference call is open to all. To participate, please use the following call-in information:

219-509-8020

Participant code: 101400

For questions or comments, please contact:

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